

Minutes of Rockport Harbor Advisory Committee

Date: March 19, 2014

Meeting held: Rockport public Library

Present: Chairman Montello, Vice Chair Chris Murch, Fred Hillier, Kevin Carrigan, Larry Stepenuck, Phil Crotty, Steve Fritch; and Harbormasters Rosemary Lesch and Scott Story

Absent: Dana Jorgensson

Also present: Toby Arsenian; Zenas Seppala

Chairman Montello opened the meeting and welcomed everybody. He noted that member Jorgensson was absent and the HAC committee might need to change meeting date. He pointed out that Stepenuck was taping the meeting. He asked for a motion to accept the January 15, 2014 minutes, made the motion himself, motion seconded by Stepenuck, and unanimously adopted

Chairman then turned to agenda. Stated that the BOS had received and turned over to him for action an application from Paul Therequilt for trap storage rental at Pigeon Cove. He passed around the application. In answer to question Stepenuck said the applicant is still a lobsterman. Crotty said for future there is a good lease form prepared by town attorneys and before acting on future applications HAC might request a picture of the site and a site visit by HAC members. Chairman said committee will turn to that in next agenda item. Stepenuck mentioned that some storage sites are a mess and need to be addressed, and that four days is enough time to clear out. Chairman called for a vote on the pending application and all voted in favor. Chairman signed the application. (Later Chairman asked Crotty to deliver it back to BOS.)

Chairman then gave out sub-committee assignments: Rockport Harbors, north and south: Murch, Stepenuck, and Fritch; Pigeon Cove: Hillier; White Wharf: Carrigan; Granite Pier: Crotty.

Chairman said to Hillier that his first task is to get the illegally stored boat out of Pigeon Cove. He said ok to call the police contact for assistance. Harbormaster Lesch concurred. She also pointed out that Granite Pier is handled separately. Chairman requested sub-committee members to check out their assigned harbors. Stepenuck addressed storage issues. Now bait must sometimes be bought in bulk and hard to store. Sometimes there are 1,000 traps lying around. Intent is short term storage. Four days is enough. Bait smells after few days. More time can be ok in winter. Fritch said looks better at T-wharf this year. Carrigan asked who polices. Chairman said need guidelines. HM Lesch said let harbormasters look into it. Chairman said sub-committees can and should meet among themselves. Murch referred to the draft lease form prepared by the town attorneys. Stepenuck said the Motif should be locked, and now it is open and kids can get into it for bad purposes. HM Lesch agreed and said lessees there would just need key. Stepenuck said he spoke to DPW about a certain ladder and it is underway.

HM Lesch handed out the Harbormaster Spring Harbor Bulletin. Members looked over and discussion followed. Stepenuck asked if the Rockport Harbor surveying is complete. HM Lesch said Army Corps is taking fifty pictures of the harbor. Hillier asked why town cannot charge for Coast Guard Cove moorings and HM Lesch responded about specifics to that site. Chairman asked about the Bearskin Neck sea wall repair timetable. HM Lesch responded repairs will take two months once started in the Fall, the new wall will be higher than present one, and town

might have to install the new day marker. Murch asked about the mooring waiting list and was told there would be follow-up to make sure nobody goes off list by mistake. HM Lesch said they mailed out 300 applications and they are coming back with fee and not too many are dropping off. Deadline is April 15th. Next year only 100 go out. Probably 450 on list now. Stepenuck asked about an additional transient spot for mooring list people. HM Lesch advised they tell mooring wait-list people about making accommodation for special circumstances. Stepenuck said that not well known. HM Lesch responded to Hillier question about how many moorings does Army Corps want town to have in place. She said Corps wants as many as possible. There is no official number. HM Story added that the transient moorings are under HM control. Stepenuck asked if the SBYC was on the wait list. Story said no and the list is online.

Hillier asked about the 2011 harbor study that the town paid \$220,000 for. HM Story and Lesch answered that the study is in their office. Chairman asked Hillier to obtain copy and HAC will get it digitized and distributed.

Discussion turned to Pigeon Cove repairs. Arsenian asked to speak and explained that at the upcoming town meeting the town taxpayers will be asked to fund repairs on top of what was already received. He pointed out Back Beach where the wall fell apart after being repaired, and complained about the spec writers. HM Story said the repairs will improve and mitigate the Pigeon Cove problem and will hold up. HM Lesch pointed out there are two article regarding harbor repairs coming up at the April town meeting. Stepenuck brought up that the sea walls should be pinned together and that was not done in the past.

Hillier mentioned that there is less and less commercial fishing in Rockport. He wanted to know if the town is squeezing them out on purpose. HM Story said the fishing and commercial fleet is vacating; and HM Lesch said that several years ago Rockport had a dozen party boats. She said they do try to accommodate fishermen and the Chairman agreed.

The Chairman turned to old and new business. In the way of old business he said there is no news regarding the HAC application to the CPC committee to fund the proposed Granite Pier extension feasibility study. He said the BOS have requested a briefing on the project and he will do so on Tuesday evening, April 15th and invited all HAC members to attend.

In the way of new business the Chairman handed out a four-page letter from the Planning Board to the DEP dated March 13, 2014 concerning the Cape Ann Tool Company project, and the PB concerns and requests. Guest Arsenian knows much about the project and requested to speak. Murch asked where the town stands on public comments and asked is it closed out. Stepenuck asked about the addressee on the letter, and is he in charge now. Arsenian said yes. He also said the public hearing was held last May (2013) and the comment period should be closed but appears to have been extended—at least that is the take on the situation of BOS Chairwoman Erin Battistelli. Arsenian said the BOS will try to get Mr. Lynch of the DEP to a BOS meeting. Arsenian says the HAC committee should get involved now and comment—it could not do so back in May 2103 since it could not even get a quorum together. He pointed out the project plans have changed a lot since 2013 and not for the better public benefit. He passed around a site plan which all looked at. The Chairman asked how many transient slips will be available, and HM Story said ten—but that is before allowance for the water taxi. He said the harbormasters will not

control the slips. Arsenian took exception to that situation. He also expressed dismay at the loss of the fish off-loading facility. There was some discussion about “public benefit.” Stepenuck asked if Arsenain will prepare a list of suggested points for the HAC, and he said yes, and the Chairman will get and distribute to the members. (Distribution accomplished by e-mail next day.)

The Chairman wrapped up matters and said he appreciated all coming tonight. He pointed out the next meeting is Wednesday April 16th at 5 PM in the Rockport library. After that the meetings will change to the Old Firehouse Trust building and go to 7PM so the harbormasters can make the meetings with their summer activities.

A motion to adjourn was made by the Chairman, seconded by Fritch, and passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.